

and I thank those in our local area, the Water Quality Authority and other entities that have stepped up and are working with us, because they really were key in putting together this model; and I urge my colleagues to support the gentlewoman's resolution here.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, my colleague has very well outlined the background of the bill. Due to his vision, this started over a decade ago, brought all the parties together, had many hurdles that were accomplished only when people were brought to the table and were able to seek the solution to be more expediently cleaning up that area. And I can tell you that this has been, as he has outlined, a very hard-worked, joint effort, not only at the local level with the State, the locals, the Fed, the EPA, all the water districts, but also our staffs who have run into difficulties and had been able to work to iron them out. So kudos also, Mr. Speaker, to Chairman DREIER's staff in being willing to work with our staff in bringing this to the solution where we are now.

I have no further speakers, Mr. Speaker, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. We have no other speakers, Mr. Speaker. I did not have the opportunity of giving my life history on the last bill, and I really am disappointed Mr. DREIER didn't give his life history in his bill; but beside that disappointment, I also am grateful to be here with the distinguished subcommittee chairwoman who is dressed in as festive an outfit for this time of year as is possible to do, and we simply yield back the balance of our time in urging my colleagues to approve this piece of legislation.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments about my dress and demeanor. I only feel that we are hoping to wrap it up this week and not be here through Christmas.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill's passage. H.R. 123 is an important continuation of the successful federal-state-local partnership that already exists in providing one of the most basic necessities of life—clean drinking water. The bill extends the current authorization of the San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund by a total of \$61.2 million—\$50 million for the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority (WQA), and \$11.2 million for the Central Basin Municipal Water District (Central Basin).

The San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund was created because of the critical need to quickly implement a plan that would address the contaminated groundwater in the San Gabriel Valley. Before important environmental laws were put into place, the Federal Government had contracted with defense companies that were, at that time, legally permitted to dispose of spent-rocket fuel without proper safeguards for groundwater. There had already been clean-up efforts in the region for other contaminants but in 1997, perchlorate contamination was discovered in the groundwater in the San Gabriel Valley. Unfortunately, at the time of discovery, many of those contractors

and other responsible parties had either moved their businesses to other locations, or had simply gone out of business. The region's groundwater remained threatened while mounting litigation between the Environmental Protection Agency and private parties potentially responsible for the contamination delayed any hope for a solution.

In 1999, the Federal Government rightfully stepped in with the creation of the Restoration Fund to provide a mechanism for those responsible for the contamination to partner with local, state and federal agencies to solve the crisis and immediately implement the clean-up. The willingness of the Federal Government to partner with local and state agencies proved to be the impetus for private investment and participation in the ongoing cleanup efforts.

I am proud to say that this partnership is an example of good stewardship of taxpayer money. Initially in 1999, when we first began the process for creating the Restoration Fund, the total cost of cleaning up the basin was estimated at \$320 million. Congress created the Restoration Fund in 2000, with an initial authorization of \$85 million, or a 25 percent investment. To date, a little over \$70 million has been appropriated, with approximately 83 percent of the cleanup provided by local sources and responsible parties, with about 12 percent federal funding.

After recent evaluation of the total project, accounting for increased levels of detected contamination, increased energy costs and inflation, the total cost of cleanup now, almost a decade later, is approximately \$1 billion. With a modest increase of \$61.2 million, bringing the total federal investment to \$146.2 million, or approximately 14 percent, the WQA and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation can continue jointly administering this cleanup program.

Their outstanding work is why this project is cost effective and such a huge success. In working with the WQA and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation over the past decade on this regional solution, there is no doubt that this increase is warranted and will be utilized in the most effective way to continue to provide safe drinking water.

The cost-effectiveness of the original authorization of the Restoration Fund is clear. And without a doubt, that cost-effective use of the federal investment will be continued in this new authorization. The federal partnership will continue to hold the coalition of local water agencies and private parties together to finish the job that we started a decade ago.

It is important to note that this bill, while originally introduced to authorize additional funds for the WQA, was amended to include additional funding for the Central Basin. The WQA and Central Basin were jointly authorized to implement the cleanup by the original Restoration Fund. These two agencies have worked side by side for many years to ensure that the millions of residents in our region have safe drinking water. While the Central Basin has realized its full authorization under the Restoration Fund, there are funds yet to be appropriated to the WQA under the original authorization. Therefore, the WQA is not responsible to provide the Central Basin with any further appropriations that are secured under the original \$85 million ceiling.

However, we all recognize Central Basin's desire to seek additional funds beyond what they have already been fully provided under

the original authorization to ensure the safety of the region's groundwater. Central Basin has stepped forward in committing to providing the 35 percent local cost share on any future appropriations they secure. Once the WQA receives its full appropriation under the original authorization, should the WQA and Central Basin decide to pursue and split a single appropriation as they've done in the past, then the WQA and the Central Basin have mutually agreed that the WQA will receive 90 percent, and Central Basin will receive 10 percent of any annual appropriation to the Restoration Fund under the new authorization ceiling outlined in this bill. I want to commend the cooperation between these two agencies in working out the details of the implementation of this bill and for their continued service to the residents of the San Gabriel Valley.

This bill is a product of strong bipartisan cooperation with the Chair of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power, Ms. NAPOLITANO, an original cosponsor of the bill and great partner throughout the years in addressing the very serious challenge of keeping our groundwater supply safe for southern Californians. I am very proud to have the support of our friends GARY MILLER, LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, ADAM SCHIFF, HILDA SOLIS and LINDA SANCHEZ. I also want to thank Ranking Member CATHY MCMORRIS-RODGERS for her support throughout the legislative process as well as recognize the hard work of the very able Majority and Minority subcommittee staff including Steve Lanich, Kiel Weaver, Emily Knight and from Chairwoman NAPOLITANO's personal office, Daniel Chao.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support passage of this legislation.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 123, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ARIZONA WATER SETTLEMENTS ACT MODIFICATION

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3739) to amend the Arizona Water Settlements Act to modify the requirements for the statement of findings.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3739

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. MODIFICATION TO REQUIREMENTS FOR STATEMENT OF FINDINGS.

Section 302 of the Arizona Water Settlements Act (Public Law 108-451; 118 Stat. 3571) is amended as follows:

(1) In subsection (b)(5), by striking "proceedings," and all that follows through the end of the paragraph and inserting "proceedings;"

(2) In subsection (c), by striking "subsection (a)" and inserting "subsection (b)".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3739, as introduced by our friend and colleague, Congressman RAUL GRIJALVA of Arizona, our colleague on the Natural Resources Committee and chairman of the subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, amends the 2004 Arizona Water Settlements Act to modify one technical, enforceability condition necessary to implement the water settlement for the Tohono O'odham Nation.

Mr. Speaker, we support this bill. It was passed through our committee on a bipartisan basis, and we look forward to working with other tribes who have similar concerns in the future; and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. My colleague from the majority has adequately described this technical correction bill. We have no objection. We urge its passage.

I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, having no further speakers, I will only mention that it was a pleasure working with my ranking member, CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, and some of my colleagues on the other side to get this very important piece of legislation for the tribe.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3739.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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# EXPRESSING SYMPATHY TO THE VICTIMS OF CYCLONE SIDR IN SOUTHERN BANGLADESH

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 842) expressing sympathy to and pledging the support of the House of Representa-

tives and the people of the United States for the victims of Cyclone Sidr in southern Bangladesh, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

## H. RES. 842

Whereas on November 15, 2007, Cyclone Sidr hit the coast of southern Bangladesh with 155 mile-an-hour winds that smashed tens of thousands of homes, damaged roads and buildings, and caused a 15-foot tidal surge that ruined thousands of hectares of crops;

Whereas early reports have branded the destruction from Cyclone Sidr as the worst in Bangladesh in 16 years;

Whereas the resulting damage from the cyclone affected more than 8,000,000 people through loss of their homes and livelihoods;

Whereas over half of the affected internally displaced population are children;

Whereas Bangladesh's Disaster Ministry estimates that the cyclone damaged or destroyed 1,500,000 houses;

Whereas the death toll from the cyclone stands at more than 3,000;

Whereas as the 4 districts in southern Bangladesh that were most drastically affected by the cyclone are Patuakhali, Bagerhat, Barisal, and Pirojpur;

Whereas one relief worker commented that Bagerhat looked like a "valley of death" in the days after the storm;

Whereas an entire island in Barisal, another district of southern Bangladesh, was submerged under at least 6 feet of water and houses were blown away by winds;

Whereas the capital, Dhaka, which is located over 130 miles away from the devastated southern coastline, was also impacted by the storm, losing access to power and water for days;

Whereas a massive tidal wave that was caused by Cyclone Sidr hit the Sunderbans, the world's biggest mangrove forest that is home to the endangered Royal Bengal tiger, leaving a wake of death and destruction that have caused experts to declare the forest an "ecological disaster";

Whereas officials at the United Nations World Food Program have appealed for international aid to help save lives in Bangladesh, noting that food supplies have been severely disrupted by the cyclone; and

Whereas, due to the limited access to water supply and sanitation facilities that millions of Bangladeshis will face, health officials have warned against the possibility of cholera, dysentery, and other waterborne diseases: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its heartfelt sympathy for the victims of Cyclone Sidr, which has affected southern Bangladesh;

(2) conveys its sincere support to the people of Bangladesh;

(3) supports the United States Government's efforts to immediately make available all appropriate assistance requested by Bangladeshi authorities; and

(4) reaffirms its commitment to provide relief aid to the victims as the effects of the cyclone continue to unfold.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all

Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me first thank my good friend and colleague, Mr. ROTHMAN from New Jersey, for introducing this timely resolution. More than 2 years ago, Hurricane Katrina struck our gulf coast with a fury rarely seen. Katrina caused severe loss of life and property to the citizens of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, and our Nation continues to deal with the enormous human and financial consequences of this devastating storm.

Unfortunately, halfway across the world, our friends in Bangladesh are undergoing their own nightmare scenario in the aftermath of Cyclone Sidr. Cyclone Sidr struck on November 15, with 155-mile-an-hour winds and 15-foot tidal waves. The destruction that this cyclone left in its wake is the worst Bangladesh has seen in 16 years, and that is not a trivial statement, considering that Bangladesh is a nation that suffered through horrific droughts, floods and other natural disasters on almost an annual basis.

The numbers from Cyclone Sidr are astounding: 3,300 dead, over 800 missing, and 1.5 million houses damaged or destroyed. All told, at least 8.7 million people have been affected, and the economic and social impacts will undoubtedly loom large for years to come.

Just as the world offered their help to us during Hurricane Katrina, Bangladesh needs immediate support from the international community. In that regard, I am proud of the way that the United States Government has responded to this disaster. The U.S. Agency for International Development has already dispatched millions in emergency assistance, and our United States Navy is busy airlifting necessary food and supplies to those that have been affected.

This resolution supports our efforts and reaffirms our commitment to our friends in Bangladesh. I strongly support this resolution and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 842, as amended, expressing sympathy and support for the victims of Cyclone Sidr in southern Bangladesh. At the outset, I would like to commend the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN) for introducing this timely measure, and also extend my appreciation to Chairman LANTOS, as well as Ranking Member ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for helping to expedite its consideration before the House today.